

*Rev. James B. Mitchell*

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DEVOTED TO DOCTRINAL DISCUSSION, EXPERIMENTAL AND PRACTICAL  
RELIGION, EDUCATION, BENEVOLENT ENTERPRISE,  
AND CHURCH POLITY.

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES. JOHN V. 39.  
SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE. EPH. IV. 15.

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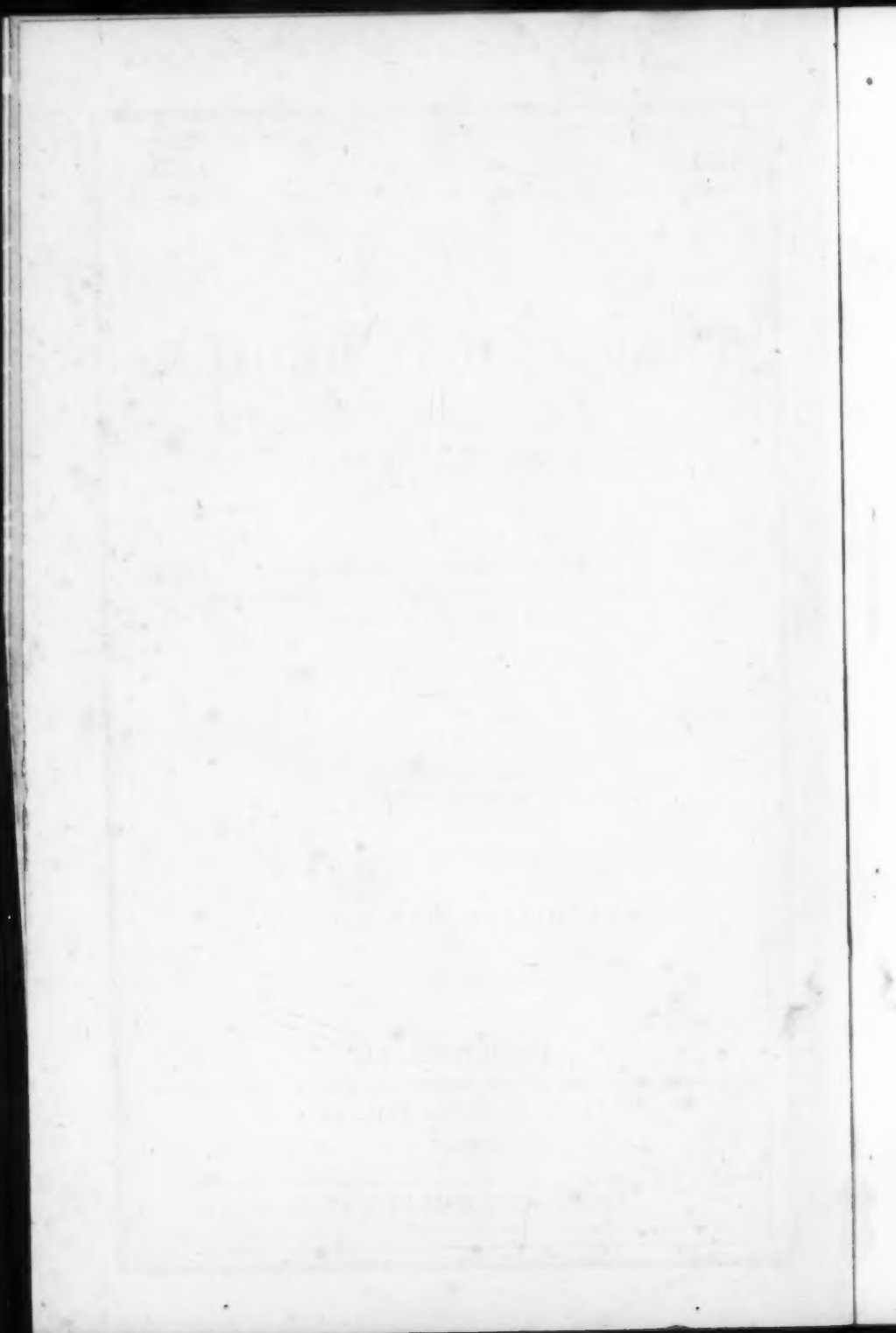
REV. MILTON BIRD, EDITOR.

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TERMS—ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.



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THEOLOGICAL MEDIUM.

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AUGUST, 1847.

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A SERMON,

*Delivered at the opening of the 17th General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, in Lebanon, Ohio, May 18th, 1847,*

BY MATTHEW H. BONE, MODERATOR.

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.]

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE WITH THE  
AUTHOR.

LEBANON, Ohio, May 22d, 1847.

*Rev. M. H. Bone:*

We, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to request of you a copy of your Sermon, delivered at the opening of the present Assembly, for publication in the "Theological Medium." We therefore request you, in behalf of the General Assembly, to place in our hands, at your earliest convenience, a copy of that Sermon for the special object above named.

Your brethren in Christ,

ELAM McCORD,

G. W. MITCHELL,

BARNET MILLER,

Committee.

*Rev. Messrs. Elam McCord, G. W. Mitchell and B. Miller:*

DEAR BRETHREN: I would be doing injustice to the feelings of my own heart were I to suppress the sense of gratitude I feel both toward you and the Assembly, for the kind respect which you have rendered me in asking a copy of my sermon, delivered at the opening

of this Assembly. I am equally frank in complying with that request. Should you and the Assembly think that the publication of it in the "Medium" would, in any degree, subserve the interests of the church, I herewith submit a copy to be at your disposal.

I am, dear brethren, your ob't servant,

M. H. BONE.

"*Thy Kingdom come.*"—Matthew 6, 10.

This text is a part of that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's prayer. The Lord not only taught his disciples to pray, but also taught them how to pray. This form is not intended to confine the suppliant to it alone in his petitions, so that he should use no other words, but simply to serve as a compendious directory. Hence, its few brief petitions cover compendiously the whole ground of the subject matter upon which men are permitted to address the throne of grace. Hence we infer that it cannot be displeasing to God to have some good degree of regard, in our prayers, to proper form. This second petition in the Lord's prayer relates particularly to the prosperity of the Kingdom, now in the hands of the blessed Mediator between God and man, until its interesting affairs shall be wound up, and it "delivered up to God, even the Father." And as its consummation contemplates the display of the Divine glory and the final and complete salvation of mankind, a careful examination into its nature and triumphs over the kingdom of darkness, cannot fail, at this time, to be as profitable as it is interesting to this congregation, whether we regard ourselves as a Court of Jesus Christ met for solemn deliberations on this very subject, which in part is committed to our trust, or as a congregation of christian suppliants before the throne of the Almighty, praying with a proper and enlightened understanding "*Thy kingdom come.*" We propose the following method in the present investigation of the subject:

I. Speak of the kingdom of God or of Christ, noticing some of its constituents and prominent characteristics.

II. Of what we are to understand by the coming of the kingdom.

III. Of some things which may be regarded as hindrances and others as helps to the coming of the kingdom.

1st, then, the kingdom named in the text, we remark, is variously mentioned in the Bible under the name and style of the kingdom of Heaven, or of God, or of Jesus Christ. Three things are regarded as essential in constituting any kingdom, viz: 1st, a king; 2dly, Law;

3dly, Subjects. These three enter into the composition of the kingdom now before us: the Lord Jesus Christ is king—the Bible reveals the principles of his holy Law—and all those of the children of men who become partakers of his saving grace are his subjects proper.—The kingdom thus constituted may admit of three variations or different specifications under the same titles—1st, the kingdom which, in Scripture, is represented as in them that are Christ's disciples—2dly, the Church militant, which relates to the body of true believers, and is called the invisible or spiritual kingdom, and also to the visible church or body of Christ, composed of all visible members of the Church on earth, visible from their profession of faith in Christ, and partaking of the sensible ordinances of the gospel of Christ—and 3dly, the kingdom of final or ultimate glory. These three, though thus viewed as different, constitute but one and the self same kingdom of God, and of Christ in every dispensation of his mediatorial administration—a kind of Trinity in unity, after the manner of the persons of the God-head.

We may now consider more particularly the three constituents of the kingdom as above enumerated, each one as named.

1. The king, whom we have said before is Christ Jesus, the God-man Mediator, "who being the eternal son of God became man, and so was and continues to be both God and man in two distinct natures, yet one person forever." The grand scheme of this kingdom originated in the Divine mind—Jesus, the Messiah, became incarnate that by the sacrifice of himself, he might lay the foundation of it in a gloriously grand and complete atonement, wide as the demands of Law and Justice—deep as the guilt and miseries of an apostate family of mankind sinners, and as exalted, in point of merit, as the very throne of God.

We know nothing of Christ Jesus only as he is revealed to us; and as he is revealed to be the God-man Mediator, his Divinity must be inherent and consequently underived. Every thing, therefore, that is said of him in the Bible, which some make to favor the absurd doctrine of either delegated or emanated Divinity, inferiority in him to the Father or subordination to the Father, must be referable either to his office as Mediator or to that nature which he assumed for the sufferings of death. Such passages as speak of him "humbling himself or proceeding from God," "becoming poor," &c., I would think it much safer and more reconcilable with the general scope of the word of God to be received as referring to his human nature, if to be con-

sistent with this position, I am led to adopt the speculation that some have entertained, whose opinions are not to be despised, that Christ assumed human nature in some glorified form before time, and in the likeness of which He afterwards made Adam; and in that nature the son of God was constituted a proper medium of access to God's infinite perfection by all holy finite creatures, as well as man; and that, after man sinned, this constituted medium became incarnate and so humbled himself that he might become the *Mediator*, as well as medium, through whom fallen man may return upon equitable principles and become partaker of the Divine nature. So then, after he had finished the work of redemption; he was "glorified again with the glory he had with the Father before the world was." Thus he is the "first born of every creature," "and by whom and for whom all things were created."

But this much we do rejoice to know, that, as soon as man needed a Saviour, the benevolence of God furnished one in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was in every way competent to take the "government upon his shoulders," "who magnified the Law" and secures all the ends of government—while, as our king, he subdues us to himself, rules and defends us, and restrains and conquers all his and our enemies. The infinite wisdom of Christ will always direct him in adopting those plans which will secure the greatest possible amount of good for his subjects—his Almighty power can ever fulfil or execute his designs—and infinite benevolence will ever incline both wisdom and power in adopting and executing such plans and such only as will secure the happiness of his subjects. The laws and subjects are therefore both safe in the hands of such a king.

2dly. The government or laws of the kingdom of Christ proceed upon purely moral principle. If any thing of a positive nature is at any time included, even this itself grows out of moral principle and is intended to ultimate in moral rectitude. The whole word of God is properly denominated the revealed law of God—the Jewish ritual especially, and more especially the Decalogue or ten commandments. The New Testament is an exposition and development of the grand expedient of mercy, through which law-condemned sinners may be brought up again to a level with the nature and requirements of the moral law; and, partaking of the nature of a covenant, and being presented as such, it admits of positive conditions, only as tests of the fidelity and royalty of those to whom the covenant is proposed, as to their acknowledgements of the rights of moral government to them.

and to all that they can render. Christ has said, in perfect accordance with these sentiments, that "love is the fulfilling of the law."—Moral law is adapted to moral subjects and always measures the amount of its claims by the amount of ability possessed by its subjects, to meet such demands, and love to God and man is the sum total of its requirements. "Wherefore the Law is holy and the commandment holy and just and good."

3dly. The subjects of the kingdom. These we have defined to be, properly, those who are partakers of his salvation by accepting the terms of the covenant of grace, through which they are justified and regenerated. They are then possessed of the following characteristics: 1. They are loyal to their king and obedient to his law. Having the law written not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of their hearts," their very nature is made conformable to the spiritual nature of the law. And the law is but a transcript of the moral nature of the Great King, so that there is a grand similarity and oneness between all the subjects among themselves, and then between the subjects and the law by which they are made one in the likeness of their King.—"Christ is all, and in them all." Consequently, we may add, in the 2d place, that, as the moral character of the King is holiness, justice, goodness and truth, so is the law holy, just and good, and so are the subjects possessed of the same moral qualities. These will embrace every characteristic that is virtuous, honorable and of good report.

Here I would introduce to your attention the terms of admittance into the kingdom.

Every well organized government makes some provision upon the subject, by which strangers are to become naturalized or inducted into all the advantages of the government. So in the kingdom of Christ. The king must fix those terms himself. So Jesus Christ has appointed the terms of introduction into his spiritual kingdom, and reveals them in his gospel. These terms are positive in their nature and addressed to the will of intelligent men, whom God, in the economy of his grace, has constituted capable of complying with them.—The terms being of a positive character, that act which accepts those terms cannot be regarded as a moral act, though the act of a moral agent. The terms of the gospel are repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Upon complying with these terms, all the blessings of the kingdom are promised. Therefore, we cannot, by any possible method of reasoning, give a moral quality to that act which is made the condition of those blessings. The mind of the sinner is

enlightened and the moral sense quickened, but the moral nature is not changed until the condition is complied with. Hence, that man whose moral nature is not changed cannot be the subject of a good moral act. God would not require it, for the sinner could not do it. Then it follows that compliance with the conditions of the gospel upon which sinners are to be received into the gospel kingdom or covenant must be a rational act put forth in view of moral obligation. And as Adam in Paradise was morally bound to obey the positive precept or prohibition, and that obedience upon his part rendered to *positive* precept if he had rendered it, would have been the test of his loyalty to moral obligation, and have secured his standing. But as he violated the positive, he is dealt with as a violator of moral obligation. So repentance and faith are obedience to positive precept requiring them, and when exercised upon the part of the sinner, he is treated in the moral government as a loyal subject and entitled to all the blessings of the reign of grace, one of which is a sovereign change of his moral nature, so that all his moral acts thereafter comport with this new nature, and sanction, confirm and perpetuate the exercise of that act which was received as the test act of his loyalty and subordination to moral principle or moral government, at least so long as he is required to "walk by faith."

The ability to comply with these stipulated terms, I am of opinion, every subject of gospel address possesses in himself, inasmuch as he is possessed of a moral sense and a rational mind. Consequently, he is quite susceptible of divine light and moral suasion, common to all such, and which, to all who receive and improve them, become unto them the occasion of their acceptance of, and compliance with, the terms of the gospel. They may and can repent and believe the gospel—they *ought*, therefore, to do it. This obligation to do it, will forever destroy any merit in them who obey, and forever form the ground of condemnation to them who will not obey, because moral light and suasion are common to all, affording an occasion to all by which they might and ought to obey the gospel.

These terms, I remark in the next place, are adapted to the nature of the provisions of the gospel. For, as those provisions are of a gracious character, they could not be received on any other terms than by faith. All systems by which men would resolve the conditions of the gospel into mere physical and ceremonial acts must be regarded forever as inappropriate and unadapted to a gracious dispensation.—Again, these terms comport with the nature of the provisions of grace

in this respect, that, as those provisions are not only gracious, but free for all mankind, so the terms are suited to all mankind in every possible condition and circumstance. And as God our Saviour would have all men to be saved, so has he appointed the conditions of salvation *suited to all*. The terms comport with the nature of the provisions.

But, in the next place, I observe these terms comport with the nature and condition of those to whom they were proposed.

1st. As man has no moral ability in himself apart from the provisions of grace, so the terms require none. 2dly. As man possesses no merit in himself, consequently there can be none in any thing that he can do; so the terms require no merit in him nor in any of his acts. They only require him, from the depths of his guilt and depravity, to receive heartily and fully Jesus Christ, who possesses merit in himself for the sinner who will believe in his name. Here is merit to secure unto him, upon principles of law and justice, every blessing and every privilege of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now, for a moment, contemplate the kingdom as a whole.

1st. It is not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom. Although it may embrace, in its militant state, some things temporal, yet these are only to be used as altogether subordinate to the great and ultimate end, and form no part of the kingdom, no more than the temporary scaffold used in rearing the building, and to be thrown down when the building is completed, forms any part of the building. Christ expressly said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

2dly. It is a peaceful kingdom. Every thing connected with its organization tends to *equality*. Equality tends to harmony, and harmony is ever productive of *peace*. And peace secures happiness and joy.

3dly. It is a progressive kingdom. Its progression relates chiefly to the increase of the number of its subjects, and their tendency towards perfection.

4thly. It is an everlasting kingdom. The prophet Daniel plainly denominates it an everlasting kingdom. The whole tenor of the Bible presumes upon this characteristic of the kingdom of Christ, which renders it dissimilar from all the kingdoms of the earth. But "all the parts are equal to the whole," is a self-evident axiom. So, also, "the whole is made up of its parts." Then if the kingdom is everlasting as a whole, there is something everlasting connected with its subjects.

This is everlasting life, because if the king "lives, they shall live also." All that is gained upon the part of this kingdom is gained FOREVER.

II. I proceed to speak something of what is to be understood by the "coming of the kingdom."

Our Catechism explains the meaning of the petition: thus we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, &c. Here we are to understand

1st. That the kingdom of grace is opposed by the kingdom of Satan, and that in whatever else the coming of the kingdom of grace may consist, Satan's kingdom must first suffer loss in an equal ratio. There is a spiritual warfare set up between the two spiritual kingdoms of Christ and Satan. Hence a part of the kingdom of Christ is militant. On earth each subject is constituted at once a soldier of the cross, armed and equipped for the battle, all at the expense of the spiritual government of Christ, and his king expects him to do his duty as a good soldier, enduring "hardness," if need be. All ecclesiastical legislation, and all ecclesiastical authority in the church on earth, have special reference to this warfare. So also the visible organization of the church, with all its ordinances and institutions, relate to the militant character of the kingdom. He, then, who joins himself to the church and he who in the church takes ecclesiastical orders, are expected to do battle for God. And he is not reputed a good soldier or a brave officer who draws his rations and wears his uniform, but who, in the day of battle, ingloriously leaves the field of action.—Neither is he a friend to his government who, when war is proclaimed by the proper authority, either by constant fault-finding or manifest carelessness about its termination, thus gives "aid and comfort to the enemy." But let not wicked and unconverted men suppose that the policy of this spiritual warfare is directed against *their interests*.—No: it is directed against the powers which have taken them captive, and for their recovery and emancipation to everlasting liberty and glorious freedom. So that, as the church triumphant draws upon the church militant for additional members, the church militant may draw upon the kingdom of Satan by conquest.

1st, then, the coming of the kingdom implies the destruction of Satan's kingdom in this respect, the re-taking of the lawful captives.

2dly. It implies the increase of the numerical strength of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

3dly. It implies increase of the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit in them who are subjects of the kingdom of Christ. This relates par

ticularly to the improvement of christians. 1. In spiritual *light*, which "increaseth more and more unto the perfect day." The increase of this light may be considered in two respects. 1st, in relation to its extent in territory over the moral world, and revealing new objects of interest and beauty. 2dly, in the intensity of its clearness or its brightness in them who behold it. In this respect it is comparable to the light diverging from an eternally rising sun.

3dly, As light increases, knowledge increases as a consequence. The prophet Isaiah says, 'they shall all be taught of the Lord.' When the day arrives in which it is prophetically predicted that the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven suns, O what knowledge of God and divine things shall be given to men, even on earth! Then, as the prophet again says, "There shall thence be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days."

3. As christians grow thus in knowledge, they shall grow in grace. They will become more holy as God is holy—more humble—more virtuous in all holy living—more love shall they feel to God, and more toward one another—more patience—more forbearance—meekness and fear, and more consecration of self and all that they possess to God and to his cause. This growth is illustrated figuratively in Scripture, first by leaven in meal; 2dly, by the grain of corn springing up, first the blade, then the full ear, then the ripe corn in the ear; 3dly, by the young child, young and feeble, but with all the members and senses of the man, which grow until it attains the stature and strength of a young man, then the firmness of the old man.

4. But, in the fourth place, the coming of the kingdom not only implies this increase of the graces of the spirit in them that believe, but it also implies an increase of the number of such subjects until all shall know the Lord—until the "heathen shall be given him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession,"—"and the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdom of the Lord and of Christ"—"when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea:" then shall the gospel of the kingdom have been preached in all the world for a "witness unto all nations." When full millennial glory shall have reached its meridian lustre, then may we look for the New Jerusalem to come down from God out of heaven, "and the ancient of days," seated upon the throne of his Father, swaying an universal sceptre.

5. Shortly after this, shall the sign of the Son of Man appear com-

ing in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Meantime, the trump of God shall sound, and they that are in their graves shall hear and come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of final condemnation. Then shall the kingdom be delivered up to God, even the Father, when the Son himself shall be subject to the Father, that God may be all in all.

III. Notice some things which may be regarded as hindrances, and some other things as helps to the coming of the kingdom.

First upon this part of the subject we remark, that God has connected the end with the means in spiritual, as well as in natural things. Hence, he has constituted certain means for the coming of the kingdom appropriate to the end in view, and committed these means into the hands of the kingdom militant, with scope and constitutional authority to appoint other subordinate means, and to vary them according to existing circumstances, which subordinate means shall, in all cases, be in accordance with the nature and spirit of the divinely appointed means, as well as of the nature of the end, and even *natural* means are to be used under proper restrictions, for spiritual ends.—Now, as the end is only attained when it is connected with suitable means, and when those means are properly employed, so in absence of those means altogether, or in the partial and careless use of them, or rather the *abuse* of them, is the end kept back or hindered.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of light. "Whatever maketh manifest is light." The means of grace, under sacred influence, make light manifest. Therefore, in the absence of the use of these means, darkness abounds. The kingdom of Satan flourishes only in darkness. The mental and moral darkness of the human soul, joined with the deep and total depravity of his nature, may be regarded as the principal hindrances to the coming of the kingdom, and all others as growing out of this prolific combination, whether they be found within the pales of the visible church or out of them. And, alas! when found within the church, they are always more fatal to the cause of the kingdom than when otherwise. These are the armor of the strong man, or the Devil, in which he trusts as the means of building up his Satanic kingdom, as well as of hindering the kingdom of Christ.

But, to specify some of the most common and prominent hindrances to the success of the kingdom of Christ; and among this class we would notice 1st, The promotion of weak and immoral men to offices

of civil power. God, by the mouth of the wise man, hath said, "when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." The people shall mourn because of the evil consequences that will forever follow when wicked men are put in power either to make or administer laws for the people. The theocracy of Israel never prospered under the reign of a wicked king. In any government like our own, where the people elect their own legislators and rulers, although civil and ecclesiastical authority are separate, yet such is the identity of civil authority with the destinies of the cause of morality and religion, that when men are promoted to legislate and administer the laws, who are reckless of morality and religion in their own hearts and lives, enough of their unholy and evil nature will be diffused into all their official as well as private and personal conduct, to poison the whole, and finally to subvert the intentions of civil law and civil order, and block up the way for the promotion of morality and true religion. Besides all this, the truth of which both the history of by-gone days and the experience of our own country in many places and instances must attest, the EXAMPLE of wickedness in such high places will forever be to religion what an infectious loathsome disease will be upon the health of a community. Thus, by the legislation of our nation, a large proportion of our citizens are compelled to violate the institution of the Holy Sabbath day, in transporting and attending to the United States mail. Here is license given for running all other public conveyances on the Lord's day. Then again, while Congressmen and Judges, and other official dignitaries, settle their private and personal differences among themselves upon the field of honor (falsely so called,) in disgraceful, bloody and often murderous duels, behold what a tide of immoral influence sweeps over the whole country, passing alike through the ball room and Bacchanalian shop, upon the most trivial, and often only supposed insult, which, by the false code of honour, must be settled in blood. Thus the channels of immorality are kept open from civil and legislative officers and offices that ramify throughout the country, spreading moral disease and death every where, in direct opposition to the coming of Christ's kingdom.

2dly. The prevalence of Infidelity in all its varied forms. This direct hindrance to the coming of the kingdom is one of the legitimate offsprings of darkness, since it always assumes the most palpably absurd positions, and only lives in ignorance of God and his Holy Book of Revelation. And were it not bolstered by names of antiquity, wealth and human honor, which dazzle the fancy of youth unenligh-

tened by the science of sacred Literature, it would long since have given up the ghost amidst the ruin which its prevalence has brought down upon nations as well as individuals.

3dly. The abounding of heresy, or heretical systems of religion.—This was one of the most formidable obstacles with which the church of Christ had to contend in the early part of her history under the present dispensation. And one too which has kept pace with her history down to the present day. Every age of the Church has had its heresy to contend against. It is rendered doubly injurious to Christ's kingdom, because it tends to infidelity and licentiousness, in proportion to the distance in departure from the truth.

It is not so much the systems of Pagan religions against which the church has to contend,—these have to be overcome it is true; but the task to enlighten the heathen would be comparatively easy were it not for the opposition with which the Church has to contend and overcome first which are located in what are called Christian countries. Religious errorists have ever had, from the beginning, but one grand object in view, that is, to mutilate the Cross of Christ and the old Bible doctrine of the new birth. And all their schemes of outward ordinances, and of amplification in outward show and human pageantry have been designed to divert the minds of poor sinful men from the humiliating doctrines of the Cross, and to resolve religion into something tangible to the senses. Perhaps this is a good rule by which to detect error and to estimate the amount of its aggravations. We speak not here of the variations among the creeds of evangelical christians; but systems which subvert the radical doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the above rule. What an avalanche of religious error have the evangelical churches of America to contend against in this day—error assuming every insidious form, and of every variegated shade possible to be concocted in the great Laboratory of Satan, and which threaten the ruin even of our fair Republic, at least to drown thousands of the sons and daughters of America in endless perdition; and thus disappoint the fairest prospects for the coming of the kingdom of our common Lord Jesus Christ.

4th. The jealousies, heart-burnings, and often open ruptures among the evangelical branches of the Church of Jesus Christ, instead of a hearty and united effort among them against the kingdom of darkness. These contentions are not about the fundamental doctrines of our common religion, but about mere denominational distinctions among them, which they themselves profess are not essential. Thus, while

some sages of each denomination are toilfully writing books to sustain the peculiar tenets of their own party, others are laboring in the holy pulpit to establish them, with as much zeal and warmth as if the salvation of their congregation depended upon that effort to establish something, which, to say the most of it, is only of inferential authority from the Bible, and will not save one soul if the points be gained. Others, if not compassing sea and land to make proselytes, are insinuating themselves, with their peculiarities, into every corner where they dare approach. While the Devil and capital errorists are invading the very precincts of the Church, and driving with fearful success through the whole breadth of the land. There is also very often a manifest want of the spirit of truth in those who do contend for vital truth at the very moment when they are making their greatest efforts, which ever has, and always will, defeat the truth—because they partake more of the spirit of error than that of truth. There is, perhaps, as much depending upon the *spirit* of truth as the *words* of truth, in order to establish truth. O! when will the Christian churches learn to cultivate more the generous spirit of our holy religion, and unite that spirit in carrying out a wiser and more judicious policy in endeavoring to promote the coming of the kingdom.

5. The general want of *spirituality* among those who profess to be christians. This defect is to be found both in heart and life. The lack of entire consecration of the whole heart to God, and a want of firmness and diligence in keeping the heart, as well as indulging in a carnal and vague state of the heart; and carelessness about applying to the proper source and means for the requisite power of managing the heart, which lead to a very eccentric christian life. This irregularity of deportment in the life of the professed christian, injures still more and more his own moral condition, and weakens general confidence in him as a christian. And besides this, he is more liable to be led away into the indulgence of things in life, which assimilates him to the world and destroys the last vestige of confidence which the world might have reposed in him previously, and in consequence of which confidence they might, at one time, have respected him as a christian. Whereas, now they have neither confidence nor respect for him. He has therefore no influence in the world as a christian. "If the salt have lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men."

This may all, at least in part, be owing to the want of early proper training as to the practical rules of religion. The many instances of

this kind, and the great number who entirely "go away and walk no more with Christ," constitute a great hindrance to the cause of religion. What the church needs in this our day, perhaps more than in any former day, is *contrast with the world*, in point of holiness of heart and life

6thly. The last hindrance to the coming of the kingdom of Christ that I shall mention at this time, is the want of liberality in supporting and extending the institutions of the gospel and the means of grace, and of the conversion of the world. The cause of the Redeemer has a right to claim a support, in this world from the wealth which the present world affords. It all belongs to God, and when he claims a portion of it for his cause, he claims no more than is sufficient to effect his purposes of mercy and benevolence towards men, and his claims are just. But how parsimonious are men in the appropriation of their means, as God's tenants, to this high and glorious end! And how much wealth is now slumbering in the bosom of the Church, or lavished, in thousands per annum, for nothing but the gratification of the pride and ambition of her members? Many of the church are even now under fearful responsibilities upon this ground. There are now appeals coming up from millions of those for whom Christ died, but who are passing daily into a dark and unknown eternity to them, unwarned of a Saviour's death, which appeals are unheeded, but in which God will not always be turned away. His kingdom must come, if he have to employ his hand of provoked vengeance to remove hindrances and idlers out of its way.

These are only a few of the hindrances that stand in the way of the coming of the kingdom of Christ—in consequence of which it has not long since come, and why it still lingers. But the time has now come up, in the history of the world and of the church, when these impediments must and shall give way. God's policy is, first to offer sinners *pardon*, and if they reject it, he is at no loss for means to remove them out of the way of others who might accept it. These hindrances are all in the hands of men—men can control them; but if they will not, God can and will control both these and those.

We next proceed to speak of some things to be used as helps for the promotion of the cause or kingdom of Christ. These we will regard capable of classification in the manner following, viz:

1st, Such as God himself has directly appointed and placed under the control of the church militant, and to be used by her for this definite end.

2dly, Those which men are authorized, from the Bible, to appoint and use for this end, but which God did not directly ordain. This last class may be varied according to circumstances of time, country, &c.

Those originating in the Divine legislation of God for and on behalf of his church, may again be sub-divided according to their respective ends direct.

1st, such as are for the immediate edification of the members of the church—their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace; and 2dly, those which appear directly calculated to bear upon the kingdom of darkness. But these are closely allied. For the church, in all her members, in the present life is to contend against the powers of darkness; and if her members are to be strengthened in themselves, it is that they may do battle still for God more extensively, as well as to enjoy increase of grace and blessedness in their own souls. So that the duty of christians, in the salvation of others, is inseparably connected with their own interests.

But of the first class of helps we enumerate

1st, The regular organization of the church by Jesus Christ the king himself. The church thus organized he hath constituted the light of the world, salt of the earth, and great depository of truth, and representative of himself in the world.

2dly, The dispensation of the truth of God, both written and preached. The ministry no man taketh to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron. When God, by his Holy Spirit, separates a man unto the gospel ministry, he saith unto him, All power is given unto me. Go ye, therefore, into all the world and preach my gospel unto every creature. Men called of God should study to qualify themselves, in every possible way, for this great work, that they may be "workmen that need not be ashamed;" and they should give themselves wholly to it. By the precious word of God, saints are sanctified and sinners converted and built up in their most holy faith.

3dly, The administration of the ordinances of the gospel, which Christ has appointed to be kept up as standing monuments of the truth of his holy religion until he come again.

4thly, The administration of church government. This power and authority Christ left in the hands of the church, to be exercised in his name for the purity, honor and prosperity of his kingdom. It is to be used free from secular or civil power, not for destruction, but for edification. Great care and caution should be observed by the church

that this power be not abused; one of the greatest evils to the church has had its origin in carrying the exercise of ecclesiastical power beyond what Christ has authorized; and to guard against such abuses it does appear to me that there should be an equal balance of this power preserved between the two grand divisions of the church, clergy and laity.

5thly, The institution of prayer. This means should attend the use of every other help. This is an appeal to God for help. He hath said, "without me, ye can do nothing." For this help, he will be sought unto. There is, therefore, the greatest reason for honest, fervent and constant prayer that the kingdom may come. The church has the veracity of God in his promises to plead in prayer, and the broad foundation of the atonement upon which to bottom them.

6th, The last, but not the least in this class of helps, is the formation of the family relation, in which God has appointed that parents train from the beginning their children for the kingdom of God.—Here is the only ground of guaranty that the Bible affords the Church for her perpetuity in the world until the end of time. The family association, properly sanctified and its reciprocal obligations carried out between parents and children, secures that guaranty to the world and to the church, and that too under the broad covenant of the Eternal Jehovah, bearing his own appointed and acknowledged seal. Parents of children should reflect seriously and very prayerfully upon the responsibilities that fearfully cluster around them in view of this subject. Persons should stop and reflect before they rush into these responsibilities. And to carry out all that is meant in the precept, "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is the only way that I can see, in the light of the word of God, to perpetuate the church upon covenant principles—save our children—acquit ourselves before God as parents, "and bless and save our happy country."

The second class of helps are those which the Bible and common sense authorize men to appoint and are for the same end. Among these, I can now only name, 1st, those which are denominated "Benevolent Institutions."

Among these are, 1st, "the Missionary Society," which proposes to send a living ministry to all the destitute portions of the earth, to preach Jesus and him crucified. Here I can only now say that the church should regard herself, in her organized condition, as God's great Missionary Society, and that she take steps accordingly and immediately, and as she receives additional members let her let them

know that they join themselves, as they join the church, to the Missionary Society, and they are expected, with existing members, to act with promptness, efficiency and liberality as such.

2dly, The Bible Society, which proposes to put a copy of the blessed word of God in every destitute family in our own country and to send it to every destitute part of the world. Can any thing be more noble, more christian than this spirit? and what can promise more in demolishing the kingdom of darkness than the universal circulation of the Bible?

3dly, The Tract Society, which at this very time, through its means of books scattered over the land broadcast by its laborious Colporteurs, is doing much for the coming of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

4thly, The American Sunday School Union, which steps up in its maternal affection and spreads its arms of help to the rising generation, and gathers in the poor, the orphan as well as the rich, places them all upon a level, as they should be, and kindly teaches the things which God has revealed them in the blessed Bible: thus helps parents and helps children who have been bereaved of parents, and trains a generation for the kingdom. And many other benevolent institutions which I have not time now even to enumerate.

5thly, Those institutions which may be denominated literary, such as Common Schools, that should be supported under good regulations, and taught by none but good moral teachers, in every parish and in every community.

The world is now too old, and our country at least too much enlightened, for parents to entrust the laying of the foundation of an education, both literary and moral, in their children, to those who are incapable of imparting to them good moral principle, and presenting, with precept, a good moral example. This is the nursery. Let it be well kept.

We might mention also High Schools and Academies, Colleges and Universities, all of which, under proper regulations, tend to develope the mind, refine the taste and manners, assist the reason and elevate the youth of any country where they are sustained in the scale of moral as well as intellectual existence, and qualify them for usefulness and happiness.

6thly, Those which I will call mechanical, which carry out into practical utility the fine and useful arts into almost every department of life, and assist every laudable pursuit in business among men.—These aid the farmer in cultivating the soil to advantage—the manu

facturer in conducting his operations successfully—facilitate the commercial community in transportation from point to point, either by water or land—draws the inhabitants of the globe within a smaller compass by the facilities of quick transportation; all of which can be employed, and are now being made to combine their several advantages in the spread of the gospel and the conversion of the world.—Soon, very soon, may we not fondly indulge the hope, that along the wires of the "Electro Magnetic Telegraph" truth shall pass from the centre to the circumference of the broad earth with the speed of the lightning blazing across the heavens? Then will an astonished and admiring world, redeemed, enlightened and saved, adopt the sentiment which first ran along the wondrous wires of Prof. Morse, at the instance of a pious lady, "What hath not the Lord wrought?"

To these, I may add many events which are given in the histories of illustrious individuals, communities, nations and dynasties; and such as will go on, in the world's history, under the providence of God, in despite of all the prejudices, contentions and oppositions offered by men, either in their wisdom or in their wrath. God hath said, "yet once more, and I shake not the earth only but also heaven;" referring to the wonderful and unexpected changes which should be accomplished among both the civil and the ecclesiastical associations of men on the earth. All these changes and revolutions shall conspire to prepare the way of the Lord and for the coming of his kingdom.

But all these are only helps or facilities, and of themselves, or in the hands of men alone, can effect nothing at all. All their efficiency and success are dependent upon the divine agency of God. The application of them to the end which we have contemplated is dependent upon the agency and fidelity of those into whose hands they are and have been committed, yet it is God alone that "giveth the increase."

But is it not most rational to conclude that when the appropriate means are judiciously and zealously applied, in dependence upon God for their success, that the end will be realized? They will be mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan and in building up the glorious kingdom of Jesus.

Let us, for one moment, contemplate what the kingdom will be when it is come. First, on earth, this long deranged and distracted world, in consequence of the abounding of sin, all that offend shall have been taken out of the way—every high thing that exalteth itself;—the mighty angel shall have come down from hea-

en, and with his great chain shall have bound Satan, that old dragon that so long went about seeking whom he might devour,—the gospel shall have been preached in all the world and to every creature,—the waters of the prophetic vision shall have become a great river, over which no infidel canvass is spread,—the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, shall have filled the whole earth, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. O my soul, shall this glorious day appear? Yes, blessed be God, it will come, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it!

Then will the king himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. Every eye shall see him. But the dead in Christ shall rise first—"they who have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they who have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation;" and he shall divide them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. Then shall the king say unto those upon the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the kingdom and joy prepared for you, and these shall go away into everlasting life. The kingdom will then be delivered up to God, even the Father; and Jesus, with all his saints of every age, of every nation and tongue and kindred and people sit down in his Father's kingdom, and God shall be all in all forever and ever, Amen.

Brethren of this Assembly, so far as you are concerned, let me ask you, shall the kingdom come? shall it come, or shall it not come? shall it come during the present convocation? shall it fully come in all our hearts? shall it come in our beloved Zion? O yes, it has come already in part! It is now coming! O let it come! Even so, come Lord Jesus!

## Editor's Department.

### Who is the Moral Man?

Where is the individual who would not be considered moral, whether he be a professing christian, a Jew, or even an infidel? Without a standard of perfect morality, how are we to know who is the moral man?

The word moral we derive from the Latin *moralis*, which is from *mos*, a law or custom. Morality is conformity to law, and we use it in this sense. Morality is conformity to the divine law; conformity to the divine law is conformity to God. Love is therefore the root and life principle of morality, or in other words perfect morality is a golden thread of goodness from Jehovah's heart running through the whole warp and filling of human conduct. For God is love, he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. The great command of the law is love: and says an old divine, the eloquent Dr. South, "Love is not so much an affection of the christian, as it is the very soul of the christian; he does not so much feel it, as he is in it." The christian is the only moral man; I do not mean the mere professor of religion, but the christian indeed, in whom there is no guile.—The ungodly, infidel and the sinner, can have no purer morality than the Pharisees, who make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but what is within?—extortion and excess. They that live after the flesh cannot please God; they are not conformed to his law, but conformed to the world, its vices, pollutions and lusts; they have no more shadow of claim to morality than the drunkard has to sobriety, the libertine to chastity, the thief or robber to honesty and innocence.

True morality is perfect love to God, by which we understand pure and undefiled religion, perfect piety and virtue, the highest moral excellence. It is sometimes called charity; and as much as St. Paul insisted on faith, he had no low opinion of it. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." This alone deserves the name of morality. It melts the frozen cliffs of pride, the frosts of worldliness and apathy; it sweetens the bitter fountains of self-seeking; it turns the hard hot desert of the heart into a spring of living water, a well-watered garden, in which the rose of benevolence, the lily of purity and the violet of fidelity take root and grow in the light of faith, and blossom in the borders of hope, water

ed by the dews of meditation and prayer, they continue to strike their roots deeper, the sap of love freely circulating in summer and in winter, with never fading leaf and perpetual bloom their fragrance makes glad the heart and sweetens the walks of life. He is the moral man in whose heart the graces of the spirit dwell. He casts off the works of the flesh, and yields the fruits of the spirit. But he that does not bear these precious fruits shows that he is not moral. He that is not led by the Spirit of God, but follows after the works of the flesh, has no better claims to morality than his father the devil, whose servant he is. As the tree is known by its fruit, so the moral man is known by his conduct—by his fearing God and keeping his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. And he that loves God will keep his commandments. It is his meat and his drink to do his will. In his law doth he meditate day and night. He loves it and delights in it, and constantly aims to be conformed to it in all things. His crooked and perverse will is not set above the Supreme will. Enlightened conscience, not blind passion, is his guide through life's wilderness, till he plants his feet on the peaceful shore of eternity and lifts his head with the righteous around the throne of God.

He is one "who shuns the way  
That leads ungodly men astray;  
Who fears to stand where sinners meet,  
Nor with the scorner takes his seat."

Moral evil is the source of immorality in its multifarious forms; and he in whose heart sin is not overcome and extirpated by the gospel, is not a moral man. Good outward conduct flows from good intrinsic principle. "Make the tree good," says the Great Teacher, "and its fruit will also be good. Genuine morality is a fruit of the tree of christianity; and he whose heart is not cured of its malady by the leaves of this tree and made to partake of its sap, cannot bear this fruit, only that which is artificial, which is no more morality than the painted man on the canvass is the living person represented. True morality is more than external conduct, it lies rather in an inward principle of moral rectitude and spiritual happiness, without which no man is really moral. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place *sweet* water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? So *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh?

In reality, he that is moral must be a christian. For the good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and likewise the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth

evil. It appears, therefore, that a man is not moral until he experiences the renewing power of christianity; nothing else dries up the fountain of sin in his soul, and causes goodness and holiness to spring up in ever progressive moral excellence. Any thing short of this is unworthy of being called morality. A fountain long pent up, bursts out in streams like itself; a dog returns to his vomit again, and a washed sow to wallowing in the mire; the lion may be put to sleep, but wakes up a lion, not a lamb. A man may quit one evil practice and take up another; he may turn from some evil habits, but continue in others; he may avoid some sinful indulgences because of external restraint, but a change of circumstances takes place, and his suppressed inward lusts are acted out; again he shows his evil heart in an openly immoral life.

Morality does not consist in the giving up of particular sins and vices, but in renouncing all sinful dispositions and principles, in the turning of the heart from the love of sin to the love of goodness. Particular outbreakings of sin may be compared with particular symptoms of a dangerous disease; attempting to remove these will be in vain, unless the disease is itself entirely cured. If this is done, these symptoms of course disappear. In the same way we should strive, not only to be rid of particular sins, but to be renewed in the whole temper of our souls.

He that would be justly entitled to the epithet *moral*, must be to that of *christian* also. The scales of error must fall from his mind's eye; his understanding must apprehend true moral excellence, the elements of pure morality; and as this excellence shines in the understanding, the will and affections must receive its image. Moral excellence revealed in Christianity, begets principles in the heart suitable to itself; it shows the elements of morality, and raises up desire to conform to them, aversion to sin, and a determination to avoid it; moral excellence in Christianity conceives moral excellence in the heart from which flows a moral life. Thus the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, beheld in the gospel as in a glass, enlightens the mind, excites the conscience, turns the will, purifies the affections—the subject of this renewing power of Christianity is a moral man, is a christian.

## The people need and will have Light.

The sun shines for the masses of the people, not a privileged class in its estimation elevated high over their heads, invested with unquestionable authority to withhold light from them: So the Bible gives light for the whole people, not a pompous order of lordly ecclesiastics, in their puffed-up superiority and swelling dignity looking down upon the common herd from what they regard the God-created summit of Holy Apostolic Succession, holding all in darkness under their sacred feet, except such radiation as is produced by a few second-hand rays which they are pleased to dole out to make it appear to the people that their darkness is Heaven's own perfect light.

How is it that the people of this land yield so tamely to the Pope and his Jesuits, who are manufacturing and using their tools to bore out the eyes of the souls of the people, like Ulysses the king of Ithaca did the eyes of old Polyphemus the King of Cyclops?

To maintain the purity, unity and welfare of the church of Christ, as they allege, a dark and mysterious power in the papal system seeks to strike down, by dealing out its furious blows upon *'The right of private judgment—Freedom of Individual belief—an open Bible—a Free press—and unfettered liberty of thought.'* Are they beguiled by the serpent of Catholicism? It is easy to discover how the *magna mater* error of the Catholic system necessarily extends its influence over all earthly interests, heavenly too, and rears its gigantic form, clothed with terror and dripping with blood, directly in the pathway of all human improvement—of all free investigation and independent action in science and government, as well as in Religion.

But can this system compass its object? Can it stifle the right of private judgment,—chain the free thought of the mind,—close the Bible, and muzzle a free press? Not while the sun shines and the rivers run, the clouds shower and the grass grows. The Pope, the Jesuits and ecclesiastics of his church, in their dread to give light to the people, are like the man who builds a house without windows, for fear of lightning; and are like unto another who intelligently insisted on pulling out the eyes of all men in order to make their stature the same, that all trees might be alike, and all mountains the same length, breadth and height. That perfect and true religion of the Bible is maintained in its perfection and truth by taking leave of reason and repudiating the Bible,

### Good Advice to a Young Minister.

AN EXTRACT from a private letter, written by an aged minister, to a young man entering upon the duties of the sacred office:

\* \* \* "Your position is an important one, and will impose—especially on the shoulders of a boy—most solemn responsibilities.—But "it is good to bear the yoke in youth." Buy and borrow all the books you can, and use them as you do your dictionary, as mere sources of reference. But few books are worth reading through.—Read with pen in hand and lay by in the store-house, from which you must draw every week, suitable materials for sermons. In actual preparation for the pulpit, avoid as much as possible the drudgery of committing; but make yourself as familiar as time will permit, with both thoughts and words of the manuscript containing notes previously arranged. If this is done, there will be no difficulty in constructing sentences in extempore delivery. When you are in the pulpit the less you are encumbered with notes the better. I have kept none before me for the last twenty years. Make all your sermons as perfect on paper as time will allow; so that at any future time, in case of emergency, a brief review will enable you to use them. It is always better, however, when you can, to prepare a sermon in view of the present wants of the congregation to whom it is to be delivered; for a fresh discourse will generally take a deeper hold on your own feelings, and of course on the feelings of your audience. Never let your sermons *exceed* an hour in length. If your hearers do not profit by what they hear in that time, they will not be likely to do it afterwards.

A weekly prayer meeting, a monthly concert, and an efficient Sabbath School, will be indispensable to the prosperity of your congregation. To aid the latter, ask the church for a few dollars to procure for the children a Juvenile periodical. Have the numbers sent to your address, and distribute them in person to the children on Sabbath morning. When read, require the papers to be returned to school, and send them out again to irreligious families, for the purpose of drawing their children also into the school. Much will depend on the Superintendent of your school. In selecting that officer the inquiry should not be who will take the station as a burden, but who is best qualified for its duties, and will most faithfully discharge them? I would also add that it would be well to have a quarterly examination of the pupils, and a sermon adapted to their capacities." \* \*



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Bro. Russell is informed that we have sent both Vols. to A. G. Register; the credits have been given.

In 9th No. it should have been William Murchinson, not Muskinson.

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